

Democratic predecessors, is so unwilling to defend the interests of the United States and our allies against Russia. All that is clear is that, by embracing our adversaries and denigrating our allies, President Trump is inviting grave and historic consequences for the United States.

Mr. Speaker, today, I simply call on President Trump to unequivocally affirm the United States' commitment to our European allies and to condemn Russian aggression, meddling, and malign influence.

THE STALWART REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago this August, Russian tanks rolled across the border into the independent nation of Georgia. After 5 days of bloody fighting, with thousands of innocent Georgians displaced from their homes, the conflict ended with the Russians promising to pull back its forces.

I happened to be in Georgia 1 week after the Russian invasion and saw the tanks on the high ground and the destruction that the Russians made of Tbilisi. It is 10 years since that invasion and Moscow and its troops still occupy one-third of sovereign territory of the Republic of Georgia.

The Kremlin claims these Russian troops are in Georgia as peacekeepers. Are you kidding me? It is an invasion. They are a heavily armed battle group waiting to provoke Georgia into another fight. They have committed horrific human rights abuses against the Georgian people, often harassing civilians and denying Georgians the ability to move about their country freely.

The continued presence of Russian troops on Georgian soil presents a major violation of international law. America's response at the time was to condemn and issue sanctions against the Russians, but the Obama administration removed the punishing sanctions against Russia as part of its foolish reset with the Kremlin.

We now know this demonstration of weakness only encouraged further aggression from Russia, and it invaded a neighbor state in 2014. This time it seized and annexed Crimea from Ukraine, another independent sovereign state that Russia had sworn to respect. Then Russian tanks moved on and invaded eastern Ukraine and occupied part of that territory.

After 10 years of illegal occupation of Georgian territory, we need to do more to help our Georgian friends resist the Russian bear. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Georgia emerged as the beacon of hope in the region and hope for democracy. Georgia's faithful commitment to a strong democracy with free and fair elections serves as a shining example for other countries in Eastern Europe. Russia hoped to break

this beacon of hope 10 years ago, but Georgia has remained defiant.

As co-chair of the Congressional Georgia Caucus, I have long seen that major vulnerabilities remain that Russia could exploit. Georgia is a small country. It cannot afford to compete with the might of the Russian bear. That is why I have introduced the Georgia Support Act along with my caucus co-chair, Representative CONNOLLY from Virginia.

Through this important bill, we hope to significantly enhance Georgia's ability to combat and deter Putin's wicked activities. With our assistance, America can provide Georgia specific advantages that can make any new attempt by Russia a costly endeavor.

Also, with modern warfare extending to cyberspace, we can improve coordination to identify Russia's cyber attacks and build safeguards within. This means building up Georgia's ability to combat disinformation and propaganda from Russia.

As we have seen, Moscow is all over the world trying to undermine democracies by invading their elections, including our own. Working with Georgian partners, we can show Russia has been caught.

Additionally, this bill calls on President Trump to impose sanctions for serious human rights abuses in that occupied territory of Georgia. Not only will it help our Georgian friends on the front line of Russian aggression, but it sends a message to the Kremlin that America will and must stand up against that bad behavior and defend the international rule of law.

Czar Putin must be shown that his dream of rebuilding the Russian empire is not going to happen. We must show our freedom-loving friends around the globe that America will stand with them. The Georgian people have shown they will fight for freedom, even against overwhelming odds.

While the Kremlin believes that it has prevented Georgia's aspirations of joining the important organization of NATO by seizing territory, we can send a signal that that victory is hollow. Georgia is still on the path to greater integration with the West. Georgia must remain, with our help, free and prosperous. Russia will find itself isolated and full of regret for ever following Putin's foolish ambition of aggression in the region.

And that is just the way it is.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF PRESIDENT NELSON MANDELA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of South African President Nelson Mandela on what would have been his 100th birthday.

President Mandela, or "Mandiba" as he was affectionately called, was a rev-

olutionary and transformative leader, who forever changed the world through his steadfast dedication to freedom, equality, and human rights.

After spending 27 years in prison, Nelson Mandela became the first Black South African to be elected President in what was also the first free, multiracial, democratic election in South African history.

While President Mandela used his administration to dismantle apartheid, combat institutional racism, and begin the process of racial reconciliation in his country, his efforts also taught the world the power of one man having the fortitude to sacrifice his own ideals for a cause greater than himself.

To me, Nelson Mandela is more than a world-renowned hero. I had the distinct honor and privilege of calling him a friend. His leadership of the international antiapartheid movement encouraged me to take action here in the United States, where I served as the Los Angeles chair of the Free South Africa Movement, organized countless antiapartheid rallies in Los Angeles, led a sit-in at the South African Consulate General's office in Los Angeles, and was even arrested during a protest at the Embassy of South Africa in Washington, D.C. I was also a board member of and worked nationally with TransAfrica, one of the most prominent antiapartheid advocacy groups in the United States.

As a member of the California State Assembly at that time, I fought for the passage of Assembly Bill 134, which forced California to divest \$12 billion in State pension funds tied to the apartheid regime in South Africa.

In 1990, I chaired the committee in Los Angeles that brought over 90,000 people together in the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum to welcome Nelson Mandela into the United States, and I also traveled with the official U.S. delegation to South Africa in 1994 to attend his inauguration as President of South Africa.

In 1998, I was honored to welcome President Mandela to the United States once again, this time to receive the United States Congressional Gold Medal.

In honor of his 95th birthday in 2013, I organized an event here in Washington, D.C., called the Celebration of the Life, Legacy and Values of Nelson R. Mandela in Emancipation Hall of the United States Capitol Visitor Center. The celebration was attended by my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus, leaders from both the United States House and Senate, and representatives of national and international civil rights and humanitarian groups.

As we reflect on Nelson Mandela's memory today, let us remember what he once said: "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

Few embody this quote better than Nelson Mandela himself, and it is my